

# TRAFFIC ZONE

VOLUME 30

Summer 2007



## Continuous "Self" Improvement

I recently had the opportunity to spend a very good and intense week of training at the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL). The course I participated in was the Leadership Development Program and it provided me with a new level of insight into my leadership style, management tendencies, and helped me identify both personal and professional areas for improvement.

One of the most important takeaways I had from the experience, was just how important it is to continuously review and assess your "self" improvement needs. When you think about it, ongoing "self" improvement is key to remaining a high-performing employee, reaching your full life potential, and insuring you allocate and spend quality time on those elements of your life which keep you energized and which enrich your mind, body, and soul.

**Mind**—In our business of providing high quality transportation services, it's imperative that we continuously work to sharpen and improve our minds and individual work skills to become better professionals and servant leaders. In addition to my CCL experience, others things I consistently do in this area include active participation and leadership in professional organizations; participation in training and crossing training activities to insure I stay up with the "state of the practice"; and daily reading (of the newspaper and other professional journals) to insure I keep up with the latest news and ever changing professional developments.

**Body**—As I grow older, I find it becomes more and more important for me to watch out for and to take care of my body. Things I do in this area include my dedication to a consistent exercise routine (this not only helps me feel better physically,

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### GDOT Goes to Career Day

Signal's Brian Shoemaker shares career advice with a class at Caesar Cone Elementary's Annual Career Day. More GDOT Snapshots available on page 22.



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## GDOT Mission Statement

*We are committed to improving safety and mobility and providing quality services to our community by:*

- *Being Customer-focused and Team Oriented*
- *Being Cost-effective and Innovative*
- *Developing, Empowering, and Recognizing our Employees*



# SUMMERTIME!



## ADMINISTRATION

### ***“Welcome Brandi Childers . . . Computer Guru!”***

On January 16th **Brandi** joined the Admin team. She is originally from Concord, NC and graduated from UNC-Chapel Hill with a BA in English. During college she worked as a marketing assistant for UNC-CH Press creating descriptive fliers for soon-to-be published textbooks. She also worked for Lowe’s Home Improvement with a primary focus in accounting functions dealing with audits and employee cash handling.

With the addition of Brandi, we have added some much needed computer expertise to our team. She has demonstrated a lot of creativity and attention to detail when she created the comic strips for our customer service focus in May. She also revamped some brochures for our Engineering Division and received much praise for her professional work. These are just a couple of examples of how she has enhanced the service delivery of the Administration Section.

Brandi is also very proficient working with the various Microsoft software packages. She is very enthusiastic when assigned a new project that affords greater opportunities to utilize her skills and learn more advanced techniques. Until she had the opportunity to work with the customer service focus she didn’t realize that she was a cartoonist!

Brandi was hired as GDOT’s front desk administrative assistant. When the position of Records Coordinator became vacant she applied and was definitely the right choice for this important position! She officially accepted the Records Coordinator’s position on May 16th; however, the transition to her new duties will be slow because we must get someone trained to take over her administrative duties.

Please welcome Brandi to GDOT. Also, if you have a project whereas you would like to make an impressive presentation, please call upon her for assistance.



### **NEW 457 PLAN INFORMATION**

Human Resources and Public Affairs have worked closely to provide answers to your questions about the new 457 plan administrator, ICMA-RC. Plans for the transition to ICMA-RC are continuing, and informational sessions will be held this summer to answer additional questions and to provide you with detailed information on your investments.

As a City of Greensboro employee, you are covered by the state’s retirement plan as the primary retirement benefit program. The City also offers 401(k) and 457 supplemental retirement plans. They are separate from the state’s pension plan and are voluntary.

A 457 plan allows government employees to save for retirement by deferring compensation on a pre-tax basis through payroll deduction. This pre-tax advantage means you don’t pay federal and state income taxes until your money is withdrawn. The plan works in a similar manner to 401(k) programs.

Even if you do not actively participate in the 457 plan, the City contributes 2% of your salary each month unless you waive participation or are a sworn police officer, so almost all employees have an interest in the performance of 457 Plan investments.

Communications will continue on a regular basis to provide you with up-to-date information about the transition and things to think about.

ICMA-RC is creating a customized transition website for the City’s 457 Plan that will contain information on the transition, as well as details about the investment line-up.

Information sessions about the new 457 plan will take place this summer. Watch for a complete schedule and additional information as it becomes available.

### ***Helpful and Important Information . . .***

- If you have a child who will be starting college in the fall you must provide in-school proof each semester to continue their health insurance coverage.
- If you replace your ID badge remember to let the Records Coordinator know your new badge number.
- 401(k) meeting - Cindy Patterson, the City’s NC 401(k) representative, will conduct an informational meeting about the 401(k) Plan on the second Thursday of every month from 2-3 pm in the Plaza Level Conference Room at MMOB. Cindy can answer your questions about this retirement savings plan, and you can sign up to participate if you wish.
- Leave balances shown on your pay stub will most likely be incorrect. Any leave slip entered after payroll cut would not be deducted until the next pay period. Payroll cut off occurs 3 days after each pay day (the 15th and last day of the month) and usually lasts for 3-4 days.



# SUMMERTIME!



## BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

### Quality Customer Service

As part of the Comprehensive Parking Study and recommendations approved by City Council, the Parking Operations Section adjusted the parking deck rates as of January 1, 2007. Just recently we've added additional signs to help advertise and promote the new rates, which are:

We've heard some great feedback from our customers. They say, "The signs are user-friendly. They are easy to read and understand at a glance." This has been helpful in that the customer doesn't have

to stop and read the signs, which slows the incoming traffic behind them. It has also helped eliminate some of the questions the attendants were receiving about the daily rates. The signs are strategically placed at each entrance so that the information is visible from both directions of travel.

The first hour free has also been a big hit with all of the customers. They can hardly believe that they don't have to pay! Some of these comments have included:

- "Yeah! This is my lucky day!"
- "I didn't think that you got anything FREE anymore!"
- "Please call Winston and tell them that they need to do this also!"
- "We don't get deals like this in Raleigh!"
- "Now that's alright! We'll be back again!"

As you can see, it's been a great hit with our customers!



### Meter Rates Adding Up

Extra! Extra! Read all about it! We've got new meter rates!

As records indicate, the City of Greensboro has had the same parking meter rates since 1969. The rates were originally approved at \$0.25 per hour when meters were first installed in the downtown area. Almost 40 years later, the Parking Operations Section has received approval by City Council to increase the rates to \$0.50 per hour beginning July 1, 2007.

Plans are being strategically laid out and we are ready for implementation. Crews plan to be downtown over the weekend of June 30th and July 1st to make sure everything is ready to go on Monday morning, July 2nd. We also plan to publicize the new rates to make sure the public is aware of these changes.

We also have bill changers located at the four city owned parking decks, the City/County lot, and the Elm/Greene/McGee lots to assist with providing the correct change for the meters.



### We're Making A Connection!

Sounds interesting, huh? Well, that's exactly what we're doing! By the end of 2007, there will be a pedestrian connector bridge that will connect the Bellemeade Street Parking Deck to the Lincoln Financial Parking Deck. They two decks will be connected at the 5th levels over the alleyway between the two parking decks.

The idea behind the partnership is primarily based on the new development of the CenterPointe project, which is a renovation of the old Wachovia Tower on Elm Street. Due to the structure being primarily residential, there will be a pedestrian connector between this building and the Lincoln Financial deck in order to provide parking for the residential customers. The city and Lincoln Financial worked out a partnership for overflow parking for their employees to the Bellemeade St. Parking Deck.

This will be a great addition to the Bellemeade St. Parking Deck and will continue to help us focus on our customers and what can be done in the future to aid in customer service for the downtown businesses, merchants, employees, and visitors.







# SUMMERTIME!



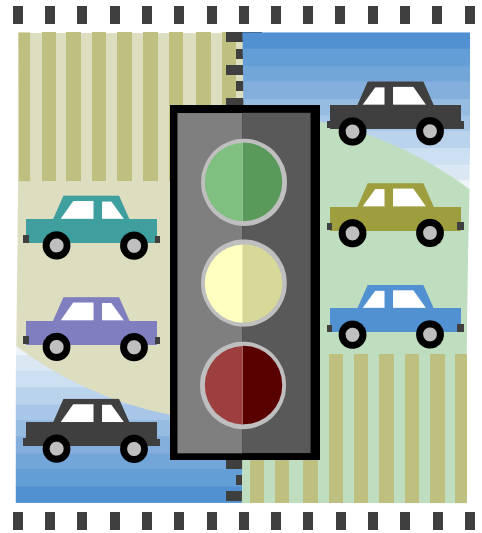
## BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

### *Signals Section*

The Traffic Signal Section is gearing up for a busy summer construction season. We are four months into a sixteen month project to adjust our traffic signal communication cables across the city sharing pole space with the other utility companies. Adjustments must be made on our 120 miles of communication cable so that fiber optic cable can be installed as part of our new signal system, which goes to construction in July 2008. As part of the signal system design, we have set up a test area with three new traffic signal controllers at the signal shop in order for the software vendors to demonstrate their products for evaluation.

In other project news, we are working with various signal and electrical contractors to wrap up the streetscape project on East Market Street. New decorative green mast arm poles have been installed from the US-29 ramps to English Street. We are also in the final construction phase for a new signal at Eugene & Sycamore Street. We have also just completed a project to install pedestrian signals at Randleman & Terrell and Randleman & Florida that are being paid for with neighborhood grant funds.

Finally, we are moving our offices! The Street Cleaning Section of Field Operations has moved from their location at one end of the Traffic Operations building here at the service center. We have already moved Sandy and the signal construction staff and are doing some office construction in order to get all the staff under one roof for the first time.



### *Signs & Markings Section*

The Signs & Markings Section, aka “Quality Super-stars” are well into our yearly seasonal maintenance activities. Throughout the winter months, we focused heavily on organizing our work areas, reviewing our equipment and material needs, and providing traffic control for special events like Chris Daughtry’s homecoming concert and Railroad Crossing Maintenance. This spring, the Signing Section will be using two trucks that have been outfitted with an “Auto-Crane”, designed to aid in the installation of sign posts, thereby reducing the need for two staff members to perform this activity. These cranes will also aid in the installation of the new Bike Route System Signage this summer.

Our marking section has installed 3M Wet Reflective Tape on the newly resurfaced Hobbs Road. This marking demonstrates the ultimate in quality, durability and reflectivity in all traffic situations. As well, we will be adding into service 2 new marking vehicles this month which are specifically set up for marking operations.

Of course, let’s not leave out the Sign Shop. Several work areas have been redesigned and renovated with more to come. The shop has also acquired a new 45 inch plotter used for cutting sheeting and EC films...NICE! Overall we are meeting our challenges well, we have had no accidents, our safety and training program is active, with two employees scheduled to attend I.M.S.A. Certification Training in June. We also would like to welcome into the section, new employee **Harrison Crews**, who transferred from Water Resources in March.

***Remember, be safe and alert in Work Zones.***



# SUMMERTIME!



## BUSINESS & OPERATIONS

### *Technology Section*

The Technology Section has been busy over the past six months. We've been collecting field data, reviewing and streamlining departmental business processes, creating new systems using Datastream, and partnered with MIS to maintain technical awareness within GDOT. Also, the Technology Section has captured over 250 pieces of sign data, 3 signaled intersections and 20 miles of sidewalk information.

I am happy to report that the Planning Division's Level of Service Bicycle Lane Project is off to a great start. We were able to capture over 10 bike lane signs and 60 bike legends along the Spring Garden and Florida Street corridors. So be on the lookout for bike riders along those roadways in the city. Also, we have completed capturing sidewalk information along Franklin Blvd.

Furthermore, we've been working with the Engineering Division to revamp the Streetlight process in Datastream. We are close to completing the process of how information will flow from the Contact Center to Kym Smith in Engineering. I look forward to explaining this to everyone in the upcoming weeks and in the next newsletter.

In working with GTA, we just completed creating a new "HEAT" bus route for students at NC A&T SU. This new route will enable students to travel quickly in and around campus. This again will help students to save money in fuel consumption and help reduce exhaust emissions for our great city.

Lastly, the Technology Section is aggressively incorporating new hardware and software so we can deliver information to our customers more accurately and quickly. The new software package is ARCPad and ARCPad Extension. This software platform will enable us to cut down on the before, during and after times of collecting GPS information. As an example, instead of spending the customary one hour to post process much of our GPS information we are now



spending approximately 30 minutes to post process GPS information. The new hardware to go along with ARCPad is our new GEOExplorer 2005 Series (GPS Unit) along with the upgraded Contour Laser Range Finder. Also, I look forward to explaining the process of creating a work order with multiple assets on the one work order. So stay tuned for the update!

Also, you may have noticed that with each of your Datastream Helpdesk calls you will receive a Helpdesk Survey, as part of our TIER II program. Please take a moment to fill out the survey so that we may evaluate our level of service to you. It's very important to us - so keep filling out those surveys!!

### *Engineering Division Reviews New Development Plans*

Plan review is one of the larger services that the Transportation Engineering Section provides for the public and the development community. We strive to find the balance for the need of the developer today that also meets the needs for the motoring public and pedestrian traffic in the future. It is more cost effective to take care of traffic and pedestrian issues associated with new development now instead of waiting to fix it in the future.

A minimum of 12 departments are a part of the plan review process for each plan submitted to the City. In some cases it is more. Last year in 2006 the Transportation Engineering Section reviewed 439 plans for new developments and issued 125 new commercial driveway permits.



## E N G I N E E R I N G

### *Engineering Division Improves Signalized Intersections for Pedestrians*

For many years pedestrian signals at intersections outside of downtown Greensboro only received consideration if there was a significant pedestrian presence and if sidewalks existed. The Millennium Edition of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices was updated to include statements that encouraged more sensitivity to pedestrian issues at all traffic signals. In response to growing pedestrian crossing concerns, GDOT Engineering has significantly modified its pedestrian signal installation procedure.

The Engineering Division's goal is to eventually provide pedestrian signals at every signalized intersection in Greensboro. New traffic signal installations include pedestrian signals even if there are no sidewalks and signal upgrades to existing intersections include pedestrian signals as our budget allows.

The GDOT pedestrian signal design practice has evolved over the years. Prior practice only included pedestrian signals for crossing the major street of an intersection. Minimum green times were typically sufficient for pedestrians to safely cross the minor street without pedestrian signal indications. Current practice now includes pedestrian signal indications for the minor street as well as the major street. Current practice also includes pedestrian signals with digital countdown indications. The countdown displays crossing time left before phase termination. This is valuable information for a pedestrian contemplating whether to begin crossing the street. To date these countdown signals have been deployed at about forty intersections in Greensboro and have been very well received by the community.

Some recent pedestrian signal installations include:

- Eugene Street and Sycamore Street Pedestrian Signal - After many attempts to improve the pedestrian crossing situation at this intersection, including pedestrian refuge islands and in-pavement "Yield to Pedestrian" signs, a pedestrian traffic signal is being installed in front of the court house. This location actually met the stringent pedestrian signal warrant as prescribed in the MUTCD.
- Wendover Avenue Pedestrian Signals – A series of new pedestrian signal indicators will be installed soon along Wendover Avenue at the following locations: Bridford Parkway, Landmark Center Drive, Stanley



Road, Big Tree Way (recently installed), and Meadowood Drive. Pedestrians must push the pedestrian button to activate the signal and receive enough green time to cross Wendover Avenue. Once the pedestrian signal is activated, green time will be taken away from Wendover Avenue and coordination of traffic flow along Wendover Avenue will be interrupted to allow for the pedestrians to safely cross. These pedestrian signals will be complete once the

sidewalk is installed along this section of Wendover Avenue. Several of these intersections will also feature pedestrian refuge islands to reduce the crossing length at these busy intersections.

- Eugene Street & Parkway – Pedestrian signal indicators will be installed soon at this signalized intersection.
- Bessemer Avenue & Elm Street – Pedestrian signal indicators will be installed soon at this signalized intersection.





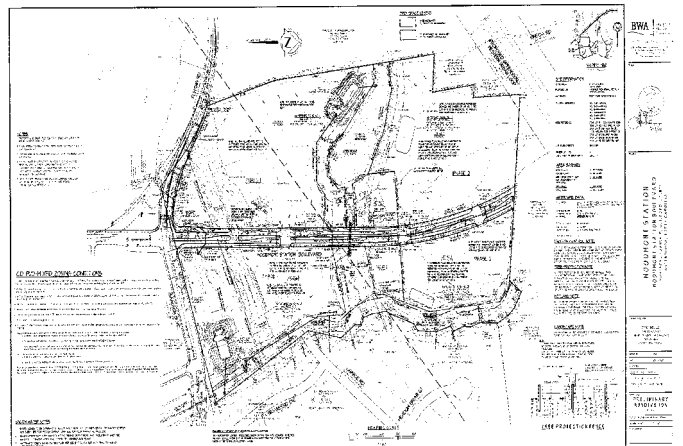
# SUMMERTIME!



## ENGINEERING

### *Some Recent New Developments*

- The Shoppes at Friendly – The new Friendly Avenue Development is located just west of the original Friendly Center Complex. The 32.65-acre development consists of 325,000 square feet of multi-use commercial and retail land uses that will eventually feature 100 residential condominiums. Several roadway, pedestrian, and traffic signal improvements were made by the developer to accommodate additional vehicle traffic and to provide pedestrian access.
- The Shoppes at Battleground – Northeast corner of Battleground Ave. (US 220) and Old Battleground Road. This development includes a Harris Teeter with other retail and out parcels. The Harris Teeter is opening soon and the entire center should be built out within the next 6-8 months. Several roadway, pedestrian, and traffic signal improvements were made by the developer to accommodate additional vehicle traffic and to provide pedestrian access.
- The Super Target at New Garden – Southeast corner of New Garden Road and Bryan Boulevard. This development includes Target, Michaels, Fresh Market and other retail. The Target has been open for 8 months but the rest of the center should be complete within the next 4 months. Several roadway, pedestrian, and traffic signal improvements were made by the developer to accommodate additional vehicle traffic and to provide pedestrian access.
- Woodmont Station at Fleming Road – Northwest corner of Fleming Road and the Lewiston Road extension and Isaacson Boulevard. This development includes retail, out parcels, and residential. The first phase will be the grocery store shopping center. As a part of this project the intersection will be realigned and a signal will be installed at this location. The build-out for the retail portion will probably be sometime in the next 12 months.
- Brittway Commons – East side of S. Elm-Eugene Street, opposite of the Elmsley Square shopping center. This development will build a 4 lane divided collector street that will connect S. Elm-Eugene Street and Pleasant Garden Road. This is a very large scale development that will generate approximately 37,000 trips per day. It will be comprised of a shopping center, movie theater, fast food and sit down restaurants, banks, pharmacies, and other commercial businesses. Build-out is probably sometime within the next 3-5 years. Several roadway, pedestrian, and traffic signal improvements will be made by the developer to accommodate additional vehicle traffic and to provide pedestrian access, including a new road that will connect S. Elm-Eugene Street with Pleasant Garden Road.





# SUMMERTIME!



## E N G I N E E R I N G

### *Engineering Division Leads High Point Road/W. Lee Street Corridor Study*

The City of Greensboro's comprehensive plan identifies High Point Road and West Lee Street as "Reinvestment Corridors." This designation was given to older commercial corridors that could benefit from "significant public and private investment to enhance the economic viability and strengthen adjacent neighborhoods". In addition, the corridor was also designated as a "visual enhancement corridor" to improve the visual character of the roadway. The Greensboro Coliseum Complex and the Four Seasons Mall and Convention Center area also identified by the Comprehensive Plan as two important activity centers – those areas defined as concentrations of uses that function as destination points.

Because of these issues, the City has undertaken a study of High Point Road / West Lee Street from South Eugene Street west to I-40 to develop a plan for redeveloping and enhancing this important corridor. Over the next nine months GDOT staff will be working closely with outside marketing and design consultants and other city departments to help develop this plan. Staff will be involved in public meetings and stakeholder meetings that will help guide the future of this area.

If you have some input that you would like considered as part of this study, you may contact **Chris Spencer** at [chris.spencer@greensboro-nc.gov](mailto:chris.spencer@greensboro-nc.gov).

### *Engineering Division Tracks Transportation Improvement Projects*

We continue to track the progress of several roadway and pedestrian improvement projects.

- Franklin Boulevard - The widening of Franklin Boulevard between Burlington Road and McConnell Road is complete! This project involved widening the street from 2-lane ribbon paving to 3-lane curb and gutter with sidewalk. There is also a grass median installed on the north end of the project.
- West Friendly Avenue - The roadway and pedestrian improvement project is moving along well with the contractor soon to complete the outside curb widening and sidewalk installation. The next phase of the project will involve shifting traffic out onto the widening and constructing the median throughout the project.
- "Billy Crash Craddock" Sixteenth Street Bridge Replacement - Construction continues on the bridge over the Norfolk-Southern railway. The original structure has been demolished and structure and roadway work will continue through late 2007. During construction, Sixteenth Street is closed to traffic between Church Street and Yanceyville Street.
- East Market Streetscape Phase II and Phase III – EMS Streetscape Phase III featuring the bridge replacement and the reconfiguration of Gillespie Street with the US-29 Ramps is complete. EMS Streetscape Phase II is nearing completion as the contractor begins median construction this month. Final paving should be completed by mid-summer. This project will mark the final phase of a successful effort to enhance the East Market Street corridor between Church Street and English Street.







# SUMMERTIME!



## P L A N N I N G

### *City Transportation Planning & Project Development*

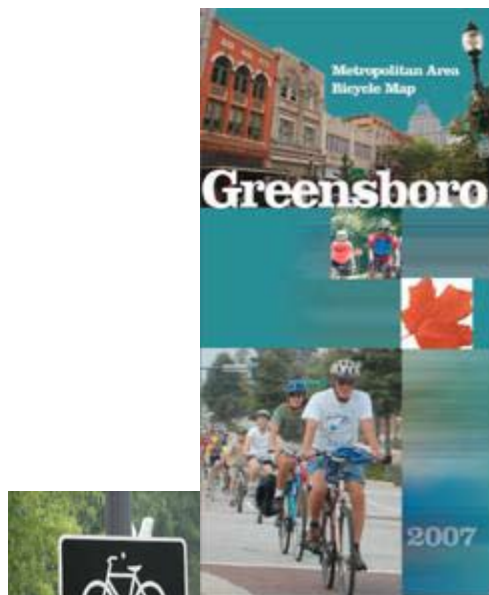
#### **New Sidewalk Springing Up!**

Work began in March on the construction of twelve projects to add approximately four miles of new sidewalk to streets throughout the City. This work, to be conducted under the City's spring 2007 sidewalk contract, marks one of a number of efforts to implement the City Council's Walkability Policy. Recent and current roadway construction activity is also adding significant amounts of new sidewalk. The highlights include:

- West Friendly Avenue: over 15,000 feet added between Westridge and Holden by the City widening project, over 7000 feet added by NCDOT in the vicinity of Urban Loop construction.
- Franklin Boulevard: the City reconstruction project included 7,400 feet of new sidewalk
- West Wendover Ave., Bridford Pkwy., and Stanley Rd. will have 9,600 feet of sidewalk with an additional 4,720 feet to build in the vicinity of the Urban Loop by NCDOT.

#### **New Bicycle Lanes & Edge lines in the works**

New edge lines have been painted on Hobbs Rd. to help slow traffic and provide a safer environment for bicycles. The BiPed Plan recognized Hobbs as a significant bicycling route facing increasing traffic which was making it more difficult to ride comfortably. Cornwallis Drive is also slated for edge line treatments. Additional bicycle lanes are planned for Westridge Road and Willoughby Boulevard this year. Thanks to the Traffic Engineering and Business and Operations divisions for their hard work on the design and installation of these treatments!



#### **New Bicycle maps and route roll out...**

GDOT has received over 50 requests for the upcoming Greensboro Urban Area Bicycle Map. To meet predicted demand, we're printing 500 times that many thanks to funding from the NCDOT! GDOT, the Greensboro Urban Area MPO, and NCDOT have collaborated to produce a bicycle map that covers the City and most of surrounding Guilford County. It shows the relative bicycle suitability of different roads in the area (based on objective measurements and professional judgment). It also shows trails and greenways that are open to bicyclists, as well as destinations such as schools, parks, and shopping. With this map, bicyclists can more easily find a route from one place to another that avoids bicycle-unfriendly roads. The map has been completed, and is now available online at the GDOT website [www.greensboro-nc.gov/gdot](http://www.greensboro-nc.gov/gdot). Before we can distribute printed copies, we need to finish putting signs on the bicycle routes. The routes were designed to connect the various areas of town on bicycle-friendly roads, and they're shown on our map. As part of this project, GDOT Signs & Markings staff will install new signs along these routes, indicating where to turn and route numbers. They've already removed old bicycle route signs from around town. As soon as we get a completed agreement with NCDOT, the State will have the signs made, send them here, and pay for the installation. When all that is finished, the State will pay for us to have 25,000 copies of the map printed. Until then, a form on the GDOT Planning Division web site allows residents to request the maps in advance.



# SUMMERTIME!



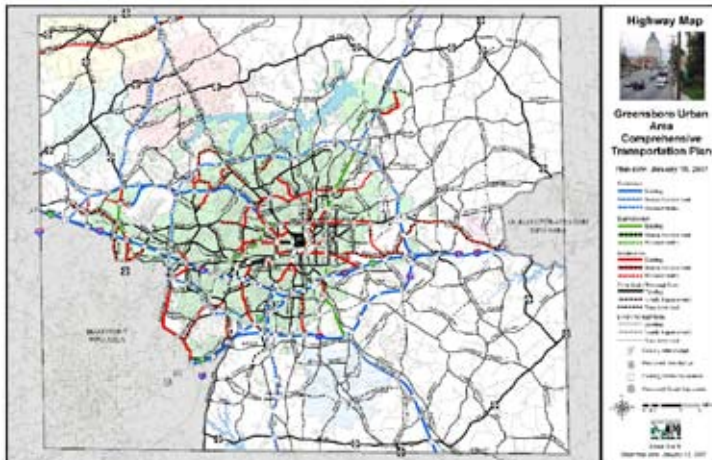
## P L A N N I N G

### *Metropolitan Planning Update*

#### **Long Range Transportation Planning News**

The MPO is in the initial stages on an update of the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The update is mandated by Federal regulations but also provides the MPO and its member agencies an opportunity to reassess long range needs, opportunities, and constraints related to transportation that are likely to face the area in the years ahead. The update will build off of the extensive work that went into the 2030 plan, including public involvement and analysis. The finished document will detail multi-modal transportation improvement plans, needs and policies for the MPO Area from the short through the long term. In the process, the plan will support goals for economic vitality, safety, security, mobility, environment, connectivity, system management and operation, and preservation needs. Several public meetings will be held throughout the process. The final document is expected to be complete next July with approval by the Transportation Advisory Committee in August 2008.

NCDOT now requires MPOs develop a Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) consisting of a series of maps including highway, bicycle, pedestrian, and public transportation / rail elements. While this replaces the Thoroughfare Plan for NCDOT purposes, it is important to note that the MPO will maintain the thoroughfare plan to support area land development ordinances. MPO staff has been working on the development of the CTP maps over the last year. The CTP maps will be coordinated with the public review during the LRTP process and are expected to be approved by the end of this year.



The MPO will also update the Congestion Management Process (CMP) document in conjunction with the LRTP update. The CMP is federally mandated for those MPOs with a population greater than 200,000. The CMP will provide data and findings to be incorporated in the LRTP. The first CMP was developed for the Greensboro Urban Area in 2004. The CMP is developed to identify and evaluate multi-modal system performance measures and strategies. The process should also monitor the performance of the multi-modal transportation system between updates. The 2004 CMP relied exclusively on system level analysis, while the new CMP will also include use corridor specific travel time information collected by the Traffic Engineering Division for their congestion management activities.

A new Triad Travel Demand Model is complete after five years in the making. This tool is key to the assessment of current and potential future travel demand conditions on major roadways in the Greensboro urban area. The new model was approved in January 2007. The model uses the latest assumptions about roadway characteristics and growth assumptions and provides travel projections out to year 2035. Applications include system level analysis, project level forecasts, and air quality evaluation. The model is also key to PART's studies to determine the feasibility of rail or bus rapid transit for the Triad region.







# SUMMERTIME!



## P L A N N I N G

### GDOT, Police Partner with Safe Kids and FedEx on Pedestrian Safety Task Force

A pedestrian safety task force involving GDOT, GPD, County Health Officials and area residents will work throughout 2007 to improve walking conditions for child pedestrians in the Smith Homes community. Safe Kids Guilford County was one of eleven Safe Kids Worldwide local chapters and coalitions awarded a grant funded by FedEx Express to implement this initiative. The chapter received \$10,000, the highest amount awarded. Improvements are planned on Randleman Rd. at the intersections of Florida St. and Terrell St. and in the area surrounding Wiley Elementary School, including high visibility crosswalks at intersections in the target area, new signs, and new countdown signals at all legs of the 2 major intersections in the target area. Countdown signals inform pedestrians how much time is left to cross the street and can reduce the number of pedestrians stranded in the crosswalk when the light changes. Pedestrian signals will be regulated to ensure pedestrians have enough time to safely cross intersections. The signals also will have pedestrian education signs installed above the push buttons to improve pedestrian understanding of how the signals operate.

### Greensboro to host the 2007 North Carolina MPO Conference!

The Greensboro Urban Area MPO and the City are the hosts for this year's annual North Carolina MPO Conference. The conference will be held at the downtown Marriott on October 24-26, and is expected to draw some 300 transportation professionals from across the state. The program will include technical sessions, mobile tours, agency updates and special activities, and is an opportunity for the organization to showcase some of Greensboro's transportation highlights. A big thank you to the Greensboro Convention and Visitors Bureau and Downtown Greensboro, Inc, along with the other partners who are working to support the conference!



### Don't forget the TIP!

At its April meeting, the MPO Transportation Advisory Committee adopted the Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program (MTIP) for 2007-2013. This document lists each transportation project that has state and federal funding and is scheduled for action through 2013. Once it is incorporated into the State TIP and approved by the USDOT, projects can proceed consistent with TIP. You can check the MTIP to find out how much a project costs, where the money will come from, and when various phases of projects will occur

Notable highway project changes include funding restoration to the Urban Loop from US 29 to US 70, which is now scheduled for construction to start in 2011; resurfacing of I-40/I-85 from High



Point to the I-85 bypass, which had its project limits extended and was accelerated with GARVEE bonds (Grant Anticipation Revenue Vehicles), and is scheduled for 2007; and the start of the environmental document for US 70 between Greensboro and Burlington.

For GTA transit projects, the MTIP is designed to meet key capital, preventive maintenance, and operating needs wherever possible. Projects shown on the unfunded needs list for transit are key needs for which additional state and federal funding will be sought.

The current MTIP is always posted at [www.guampo.org](http://www.guampo.org) (scroll to the bottom of the page) along with a copy of the Project Update Newsletter that presents project schedule information in a more user friendly format!





# SUMMERTIME!



## *The Return of Serena's Song*

On June 9 and 10, Serena's Song returned to Greensboro to provide tethered balloon flights over Barber Park for persons with disabilities and their families. Serena's Song is the world's first wheelchair-accessible hot air balloon, touring the US and Canada giving gifts of the balloon experience to those who otherwise could never sail. The oversized basket is accessed using a removable ramp that allows wheelchairs to easily maneuver up into the structure. A swinging door and locking safety bar allows space for the chairs to enter easily, unlike standard balloon baskets that require the occupants to climb over the rigid walls.

Serena's Song has been in service since 1985. It is the brainchild of operator Gary Waldman, father of a child with disabilities named Serena. When hearing her first screams of delight in riding in a hot air balloon, Gary was inspired to create an opportunity to share the experience with others. For the last six years, Serena's Song has been sponsored nationally by Veolia Transportation, GTA's public transportation contractor. The balloon tours take the service to different Veolia properties around the country including GTA's SCAT service where the clients and others with disabilities are given the opportunity to take flight.

Because the balloon is hot air driven using propane fuel, flights typically take place in the cool of the early morning and evening. Although Gary and his business partner Phil Gray handle much of the process, they rely heavily on volunteers for the ground crew operations. For this weekend, staff from GTA, SCAT and Veolia was available to lend a hand with the flights.

Inflating of the balloon follows a simple process after unpacking the pieces from its custom trailer. It starts by laying the basket on its side and connecting the fabric envelope along with the propane burners to the wicker basket. An industrial fan is started to blow cold air into the envelope. When the fabric swells, then the propane burners are ignited to heat the cold air already in the envelope. As the air goes into the envelope, it rises, causing the balloon to stand into a vertical position. Once upright, the craft is ready to fly.

For all, the moment of truth would come as the door was secured and the pilot blew his whistle and announced "Going Up!" With a pull of the cord, the propane burners shot forth flames of over 12 million Btu's (British Thermal Units) and the balloon begins to lift upward above the park. After reaching the maximum altitude, the pilot will hold the craft in place to allow the passengers to look out over the landscape and enjoy the wonderful bird's eye view. When time to return, the pilot would then slowly lower the craft back to the earth with minimal blasts of flame as the ground crew reins in the guide ropes. Joining the balloon crew also was GTA operator Tim Neal, dressed as a clown providing the children with balloon animals and crazy antics as they waited their turn to go aloft.

"Out of all the places we go to fly, this location really is one of our favorites" says Gary Waldman. "The nice, open space gives us plenty of maneuver room. And the fact that we are in a bowl area below hills and trees helps protect us from overpowering winds making a great flight."



*Continued on page 13*



# SUMMERTIME!



## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

*SERENA, continued from page 12*

Throughout the weekend, riders would go up and down, enjoying the unique experience that unlike many other activities in their personal lives, was not limited by their disabled status. After each ride, the passengers and their caretakers shared their thanks for a day of enjoyment. But they aren't the only ones to be pleased with the event. "It makes us feel really good to see the smiles it brings to their faces" said Nancy Nichols, General Manager of Veolia.

After concluding the last day of flights in Greensboro, Gary and Phil work with the volunteers to deflate the balloon and store everything back in its trailer, preparing for flights next week with Winston-Salem Transit Authority.

The thrill of a hot air balloon ride is one that not many people are fortunate enough to feel, but for this one weekend in Barber Park, SCAT clients, other persons with disabilities and family members were all able to take to the skies and enjoy the wonder of a beautiful June day in Greensboro.







## *Behind the Windshield: Traffic Counting*

5...6...7...

Counting sheep is an old tactic for those suffering from insomnia. But for the Greensboro DOT Traffic counting team, counting cars is not the prelude to an afternoon nap, but still yet another way GDOT delivers important services to our private and corporate citizens.

Hanging out with a couple of traffic counters, **Judy Powell** and **Damon Owens**, was a great way to learn about a service that few people take notice of, but serves an important role in traffic planning and engineering.

The traffic counters are out in the field conducting their surveys three days a week from 7am to 6pm. Rain, snow, or drought conditions do not keep the team from monitoring the number of cars traveling the city roadways.

In this particular day, I joined the counters at the intersection of New Garden Road and Horse Pen Creek Road, an intersection that sees approximately 24,000 vehicles per day. Approaching Judy, the first thing you notice is the orange colored device attached to her steering wheel.

"This is the counter" she says. Its face features the drawing of a standard intersection with buttons in each lane, and then an additional set of buttons along the bottom edge. "When the vehicles come through the intersection, I press the corresponding button for their direction of travel, whether they are continuing straight through or turning right." As they are working in pairs today, Damon on the opposite corner is counting the vehicles approaching from the opposite direction or turning left. They both work in increments of 15 minutes, not only counting the number of motorized vehicles, but also cyclists and pedestrians.

Judy continues "Each vehicle counts as one click, however, if it is a truck or other large vehicle, we press this

button first to indicate so," pointing to one of a series of buttons along the bottom edge of the machine. The traffic counters' priority is to get accurate counts that the standard roadway mounted automatic counters cannot do. The familiar strips that are seen crisscrossing roadways is able to count by the number of tires rolling over the strip, but with the variety of vehicles on the road with anywhere from two to eighteen wheels, getting a good read can be tricky. Especially if you are looking not only for the number of vehicles approaching the intersection, but what way they exit. "I simply count the cars as they actually go through the intersection...not while they are sitting at the light. You don't get confused that way on what you have or have not counted already."

While Judy is observing from her post on the south side, Damon is busy clicking on the north. He explains to me, never taking his eyes off the road how their routines run. "We use the counters for about a week at a time. When Doug (Matthews) delivers the boxes to us on site, we count the assigned intersections one at a time. For some smaller intersections, it might take only one of us working, but the larger ones such as this one, we do it as a team. The counts are always for one day." Having the boxes retrieved on site eliminates the need for the counters to spend precious counting time going back and forth to the office.

When asked about what she sees in addition to cars passing through, Judy explains that she sees it all. "Running red lights, a number of traffic accidents...I just saw one yesterday." Damon's response is not what he sees, but what sees him. "From time to time, some suspicious person will call the police" he says from behind the prominent 'Traffic Counting' sign. "They look over here and see me sitting

*Continued on page 15*







# SUMMERTIME!

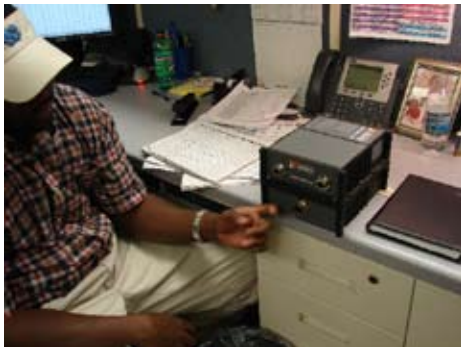


*COUNTING, continued from page 14*

all day and don't figure out what's going on." Although they both look very comfortable in their vehicles with their refreshments and music, both say they enjoy the fact that they aren't confined to the vehicle. On a nice day, you can expect to see them in a lawn chair looking like a day at the beach although they are alert to the task at hand.

Judy and Damon's job retrieving the raw numbers is only the first half of the process. Transportation Engineering Specialist **Doug Matthews** takes the information and converts it into a usable form. "Our counters follow an annual schedule I provide, surveying all the intersections in Greensboro roughly once every other year. However, we do work on specific requests from the community or for supporting special projects or upgrades." In this case, the counting at New Garden and Horse Pen Creek is to support new timing efforts along New Garden Road in response to the new development at the Target Shopping Center.

Doug expertly connects the boxes with his laptop computer to begin downloading the weekly data. Once finished, he checks the information over and then assembles it into a final report. It is now ready to share with whoever desires the information.



# CITY OF GREENSBORO

P.O. BOX 3138

GREENSBORO, NC 27402

Traffic Counter: J. Powell

Notes:

Weather: Sunny

Street: Horspen Creek & New Garden

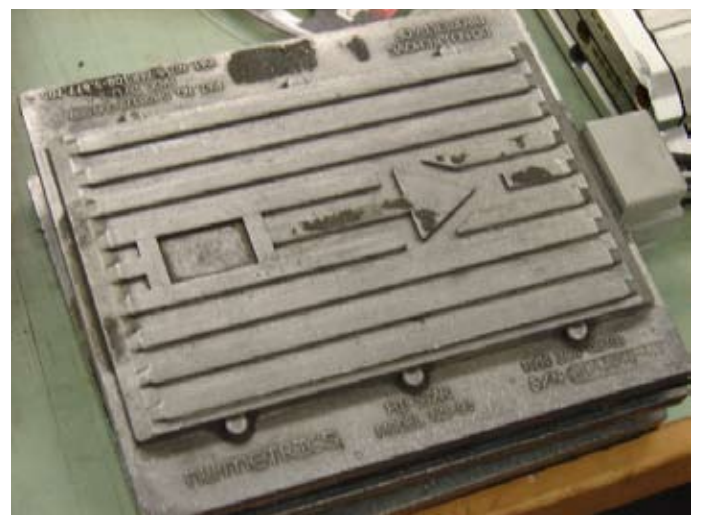
File Name: HORSPEN-NEWGARDEN

Site Code: 00000000

Start Date: 5/17/2007

Page No: 1

Counts Per Hour - Unidirectional																	
Horspen Creek	Time	Right	Thru	Left	Ass. Tot	Horspen Creek Ramp	Time	Right	Thru	Left	Ass. Tot	New Garden	Time	Right	Thru	Left	Ass. Tot
Start Time	End Time	Right	Thru	Left	Ass. Tot	Start Time	End Time	Right	Thru	Left	Ass. Tot	Start Time	End Time	Right	Thru	Left	Ass. Tot
07:30 AM	07:35 AM	43	18	15	76	4	20	21	45	7	41	73	121	6	33	15	54
07:35 AM	07:40 AM	188	72	38	298	13	25	15	53	19	76	77	172	8	31	25	64
07:40 AM	07:45 AM	130	41	51	222	11	48	75	134	43	85	136	264	18	82	43	143
07:45 AM	07:50 AM	148	66	46	260	23	45	38	106	74	122	123	320	28	130	79	237
07:50 AM	07:55 AM	423	149	102	674	47	125	169	341	143	225	404	694	58	264	148	523
08:00 AM	08:05 AM	170	46	38	254	16	49	38	103	33	118	97	245	26	140	39	185
08:05 AM	08:10 AM	194	76	34	298	15	35	32	82	34	118	89	241	17	82	73	172
08:10 AM	08:15 AM	291	78	49	418	19	54	52	125	87	186	83	355	12	88	34	134
08:15 AM	08:20 AM	145	77	48	270	18	38	38	94	73	41	43	157	13	84	48	145
08:20 AM	08:25 AM	779	178	144	1099	68	143	153	364	114	388	311	813	74	370	224	768
*** DECADE ***																	
09:30 AM	09:35 AM	72	17	50	139	8	16	8	32	11	43	25	79	12	71	41	124
09:35 AM	09:40 AM	121	36	44	201	20	22	32	74	18	52	28	98	18	42	31	91
09:40 AM	09:45 AM	153	53	94	340	28	38	40	106	29	95	53	177	30	113	72	215
10:00 AM	10:05 AM	83	23	18	124	22	25	18	65	19	49	30	118	12	78	43	133
10:05 AM	10:10 AM	87	31	28	146	13	28	34	75	33	94	27	154	12	83	43	138
10:10 AM	10:15 AM	71	8	34	113	16	20	21	57	41	13	66	55	152	17	86	47
10:15 AM	10:20 AM	62	17	23	102	22	30	27	79	13	45	31	117	18	88	31	137
10:20 AM	10:25 AM	303	44	95	442	73	103	100	276	43	129	133	379	57	341	188	562
11:00 AM	11:05 AM	33	9	3	45	8	6	9	23	9	8	8	25	6	6	8	20
11:05 AM	11:10 AM	66	15	17	98	27	16	21	64	13	49	38	100	11	73	73	126
11:10 AM	11:15 AM	88	14	26	128	11	17	48	76	17	38	40	95	11	72	14	97
11:15 AM	11:20 AM	177	38	46	261	46	39	77	163	40	127	87	294	28	157	111	336
12:00 PM	12:05 PM	207	28	28	263	16	41	46	103	27	142	33	202	27	142	73	317
12:05 PM	12:10 PM	83	15	33	131	29	45	41	115	13	181	57	311	24	140	86	363
12:10 PM	12:15 PM	83	12	38	133	15	44	32	91	10	124	37	180	48	133	43	313
12:15 PM	12:20 PM	81	11	17	109	30	41	46	117	17	113	78	208	38	136	72	317
12:20 PM	12:25 PM	562	66	94	722	104	171	165	440	54	468	158	773	117	533	281	1063
01:00 PM	01:05 PM	88	28	25	138	16	14	45	75	36	116	42	194	23	154	53	303
01:05 PM	01:10 PM	72	28	34	134	13	37	40	90	36	90	58	184	22	122	33	237
01:10 PM	01:15 PM	160	56	59	275	29	51	85	165	72	206	100	378	45	276	86	540
02:00 PM	02:05 PM	145	48	45	238	85	95	94	274	44	284	80	398	54	340	128	662
02:05 PM	02:10 PM	88	16	13	117	15	16	38	69	31	118	45	194	22	109	73	296
02:10 PM	02:15 PM	74	18	19	111	21	30	17	68	36	114	40	190	46	117	74	324
02:15 PM	02:20 PM	83	21	33	137	28	43	38	109	40	184	40	308	18	121	76	326
02:20 PM	02:25 PM	388	118	117	623	139	164	129	432	151	526	208	886	118	531	298	1317
03:00 PM	03:05 PM	121	13	26	159	15	46	32	93	36	90	37	163	13	113	73	296
03:05 PM	03:10 PM	113	25	33	171	24	47	33	104	31	94	53	178	16	121	81	306
03:10 PM	03:15 PM	234	38	59	330	39	93	65	197	67	184	90	341	29	234	154	602
04:00 PM	04:05 PM	116	24	37	177	22	50	38	110	35	123	44	200	28	143	126	367
04:05 PM	04:10 PM	94	26	31	151	17	76	52	145	40	138	76	254	23	136	96	363
04:10 PM	04:15 PM	88	14	41	143	16	77	31	124	33	126	81	236	24	141	91	342
04:15 PM	04:20 PM	81	13	30	124	16	109	48	173	13	189	81	283	38	149	98	397
04:20 PM	04:25 PM	363	87	139	639	124	316	169	609	121	586	281	914	111	611	409	1311
05:00 PM	05:05 PM	161	13	33	207	10	87	61	158	30	138	50	246	27	177	91	375
05:05 PM	05:10 PM	111	19	36	166	40	109	83	232	36	123	57	206	24	215	139	417
05:10 PM	05:15 PM	188	18	45	251	48	175	85	308	46	147	58	251	36	243	178	597
05:15 PM	05:20 PM	106	22	38	166	17	87	67	171	37	146	29	212	22	111	111	334
05:20 PM	05:25 PM	441	72	146	659	113	417	303	833	149	552	324	916	138	644	517	1323



*Continued on page 16*



# SUMMERTIME!



## *COUNTING, continued from page 15*

As mentioned before, human counters are not the only options for the job. Traffic indicators can be used simply by laying them unobtrusively in the middle of the lanes. The flat squares not only register the number of vehicles passing over, but also their speed and even the weather conditions. This information is important for speed studies when there may be a need to apply traffic slowing features to a roadway. Doug is able to simply bring the boxes back to his office and download the information similar to the live counter's machines, but newer models allow the information to be accessed remotely by wi-fi. But for most of the intersections, Doug relies on the accuracy of the human counters like Damon and Judy...a system that works well for Greensboro and other communities

around the nation. When asked what the future holds for traffic counting in Greensboro, Doug is quick to answer the Internet. Right now, to get copies of traffic counts, you have to send a written request to Doug and he will respond with a mailed copy or an e-mailed .pdf file. But he hopes to have all of the traffic counts archived on the GDOT website where anyone can quickly download the desired numbers. Until that happens, Doug is happy to deliver traffic information with a simple phone call or email through the GDOT website.

So as you pass through Greensboro intersections and see a person sitting in a lawn chair working a box in their hands, it is not the latest in gaming technology, but the ongoing service delivery from Greensboro Department of Transportation.

## *Improvement, continued from page 1*

but I also find it provides me with a good outlet to think, plan, and relax mentally); paying more attention to having yearly physicals and dental check-ups; and paying stricter attention to my diet and eating habits to insure I feel good and my engine runs correctly.

**Soul**—We all have things that we love to do but, never seem to find enough time to do them. For me, these soul activities are some of the most important things I use to keep me happy and motivated and at the same time, keep me grounded (by knowing and seeing how blessed I am and what a difference I can make in the lives of others by giving back). Things I do in this area include spending as much quality time as possible with my family; keeping well grounded in my faith and spiritual life; volunteering with the local United Way and other community groups; and spending time serving as a mentor for both young professionals and a few kids in my neighborhood.

Over the next few days, spend some quality time thinking about and writing down those mind, body, and soul items that are important to you; identifying those items that you know you need to improve or want to focus more time and attention on in the future; and finally, writing down specific dates or milestones when you want things to happen.

With this list in hand, you will automatically begin to work on those things which need improving but more importantly, you will begin to feel much better about yourself, your work/life balance, and you will gain a renewed sense of satisfaction and fulfillment in the work you do and the difference you makes in the lives of others!

In closing, continued thanks to each of you for all of your outstanding work and quality service to our community. As I always say (and have made reference to in this article), I do hope each of you will schedule and take some well deserved time off this summer (or fall) to relax, spend with your family and friends, doing what you like, and improving yourself. Stay safe!



# SUMMERTIME!



## *Bus Rodeo Round Up*

Are you ready to ride? No, we're not talking about a rodeo, as in bucking bulls. The North Carolina Public Transportation Rodeo is a yearly competition between professional fixed route and paratransit bus operators. The events are held at various levels, starting with the regional Rodeo, followed by a state event and finally the national event normally held in conjunction with the American Public Transportation Association annual meeting, to be held this October in Charlotte. Participants dream of making the top national event, but to get there, the road begins with the regional rodeo, held this year in Kannapolis, NC.

On a fair weather morning in May, 35 operators assembled in the parking lot of an abandoned K-mart that has been transformed by the rodeo volunteers into the competition course for the day. Participants represented several local transit agencies including Greensboro Transit Authority, Winston-Salem Transit Authority, PART Express and Veolia-Concord. Each hoped to take home the winner certificates by outpacing their peers in 15 different categories created to mirror real-world conditions operators face on their daily routes including:

- Pre-trip inspection – Here, the operators perform a bumper-to-bumper review of the vehicle's operational and safety systems which is more than merely kicking the tires. Every signal light is checked and every indicator monitored to ensure the vehicle will perform for the customers at top efficiency. Vehicles that carry millions of passengers a year must be in top shape in order to make its thousands of passenger miles as safe as possible.
- Personal Appearance – Besides the vehicles themselves, the closest contact riders have with GTA are the operators, and professionally dressed drivers can make a huge difference in customer service. Here at the rodeo, the operators are critiqued from head to toe like a reality fashion show to insure that their appearance is as professional as their conduct. No missing buttons or scruffy shoes are allowed here. Those who are impeccably dressed have the best chances of scoring the maximum number of points.
- 1st Passenger Stop – You may think that picking up passengers is merely stopping the bus and opening the door. It's a little more involved than that. The 1st passenger stop portion reflects this which includes monitoring other traffic, applying the correct signals, coming to a smooth stop, opening the front and rear doors, lowering the bus, extending wheelchair ramps, issuing transfers, answering questions and a number of other tasks all within a brief timeframe.
- Serpentine – An S-shaped course of cones that the fixed route and paratransit riders must travel at their own speed attempting not to flatten the cones with the 40 inch diameter tires.
- Off-set Street Parking – Among the pet peeves of bus passengers are being able to step directly from the curb onto the bus without an extra step into the gutter. This category judges how closely the operator can get the vehicle to the curb for passenger pickup and delivery.
- Rear Dual Clearance – The same as Off-set Street Parking, but this focuses on the rear doors for deboarding passengers. With the large buses averaging almost ten feet wide, negotiating the rear door within inches of the curb without damaging illegally parked cars (cones) takes a steady hand.
- Right turns, Left turn, Left-hand reverse, Right-hand reverse – just like in a car except you have 40 feet of vehicle to keep off of the curb.



*Continued on page 18*





# SUMMERTIME!



*BUS RODEO, continued from page 17*

- Time-Keeping – The desire of every transit system, and every transit system's customers is to run on schedule. Throughout this course, the operators are being timed as they navigate turns and make stops. The best completion times can go a long ways towards winning the overall event.
- Smoothness of Operations – getting through the course quickly is one goal. Just as important is to do it gently. Carrying precious cargo, bus operators must negotiate their routes with a minimum amount of jostling and hard braking, lest the passengers be discomforted or injured. Each rodeo bus carries a passenger who is judging the comfort of the entire ride. Obviously, if one of the judges grabs their neck with claims of whiplash, points will be deducted.
- Diminishing Clearance – the final competition and one of the most exciting. The vehicle operator quickly accelerates the bus up to maximum speed through a v-shaped section of cones that merges closer and closer together until there are literally inches of clearance between the cones and the bus. Finally, at the end of the segment, the operator must brake and stop as close as possible to the lone cone without hitting it (think of the Greg & Marsha driving contest episode of the Brady Bunch without the egg.)

At the end of the Kannapolis competition, the scores were tallied and the winners were announced. GTA Operator Dexter Vines placed 3rd in the Fixed Route Division with 605 out of 700 points. Robin Dillion, a long time veteran of the rodeo also placed 3rd in the Paratransit Division with 568 out of 700 points.

The GTA operators are not City of Greensboro employees but are employees of the Public Transportation Division's contractor Veolia Transportation. But their performance, on the rodeo course and on the streets of Greensboro is a direct reflection of the City, and we appreciate their quest for perfection in the delivery of their services for our customers. We wish them luck as the winners go on to the state rodeo competition in Wilmington. Watch out for those cones!





# SUMMERTIME!



## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

### ***HEAT's first year report card...a success with students and more!***

In educational terms, you can say that the first year of service for Higher Education Area Transit rates an A-plus. Expectations for Greensboro's first college and university based transit system were easily met as over 130,000 passenger trips took place on the HEAT buses by students during the 2006-2007 school year. In addition, over 260,000 trips were made by students on GTA routes...a grand showing. But the numbers don't stop there. Not to be left out of the benefits of the new service, GTA passengers have also taken to HEAT, using the routes when convenient to directly access their favorite destinations such as Friendly Center.

The year started off with the HEAT partnership between Greensboro Transit Authority and six colleges and universities: Bennett College for Women, Elon University School of Law, Greensboro College, Guilford College, Guilford Technical Community College and the University of North Carolina at Greensboro. North Carolina A&T State University joined the partnership this past spring to bring the system up to full strength as intended by the planners of the service.

Extensive research and planning between GTA, its partners, and consultants Clear View Strategies and Dan Boyle and Associates resulted in the rollout that became an immediate hit with students. Operational details such as bus and shelter acquisitions, bus route and stop placement and timetables were created after looking at what the needs of the college community would be during the 39 weeks a year the service would operate. The HEAT Technical subcommittee covered all aspects of service delivery to ensure that students' first experience with public transportation would be a memorable one. One important feature that the committee had to overcome persistent obstacles for was the compatibility of student ID cards with the HEAT and GTA fare boxes. Between working with the fare machine vendor and the Information Technology representatives of the schools, a majority of the institutions were able to use their student ID for bus access. For the remainder, custom fare cards were designed for each semester of use.



Thanks to another sub-committee's focus on marketing and communications, HEAT was never at a loss for publicity. The website, located at [rideheat.com](http://rideheat.com) has received over 1.5 million hits over the first year. As was predicted from early student research, the students have relied heavily on the website for route and schedule information, campus event locations, and all things HEAT. Speaking of events, one of the

largest promotional efforts was the sponsorship of Get Down!Town, Greensboro's official college welcome back party. In addition to an on-site booth with lots of cool giveaways and information, HEAT service was running at capacity, transporting hundreds of stu-

dents to the downtown block party.

There are a number of changes in the works for HEAT's second year of service. Stops will be moved or added on UNCG HEAT 73 to accommodate the growth of student housing in the UNCG vicinity. In addition, Route 75 will be created that will serve off-campus housing and the Summit Avenue shopping area in the vicinity of NC A&T. Another notable change will be the addition of UNCG faculty to the fare pass program with their administration providing additional funding for the venture. New buses are expected to arrive this summer for intake to include wrapping with the all-too-familiar image found on the current vehicles.

The first year of HEAT can by all means be declared a success. Special thanks to all of those who helped make it happen and we look forward to a fantastic second year of service beginning August 8.



# SUMMERTIME!



## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

### ***GTA joins PART & Triad Air Awareness for the Triad Commute Challenge***

It's going to be a long, hot summer...the perfect recipe for increased air pollution in the Triad. Commuting to work and school in personal automobiles are a large part, but GTA hopes to help alleviate the problem with the use of alternative transportation. From May 1 to August 31, GTA has partnered with Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation and Triad Air Awareness for the Triad Commute Challenge. Simply visit the TCC website and sign

a pledge form committing to use one or more alternative methods of transportation this summer. Then, at least once this summer, get where you're going by riding public transportation, bicycling, walking, car pooling or even telecommuting (get permission from your boss first!). Drawings for prizes will occur throughout the summer. Other partners in the program include HEAT, Winston-Salem Transit Authority and Hi-Tran. For more details, visit the Triad Commute Challenge website from the link on the GTA home page.

### ***GTA makes route changes to ease overcrowding***

An important characteristic of an effective public transportation system is the continuing ability to adapt to changes in riding habits. In response to concerns raised by GTA riders about overcrowded buses on Route 12 which serves Goodwill Industries & Urban Ministries, GTA has implemented the following changes in order to better serve the riding public.

#### **The following new stops have been established for Route 13:**

##### ***Outbound:***

Eugene St. & Lee St. (also served by Route #12)  
Eugene St. & Bragg St. (also served by Route #12)  
Eugene St. & Bilbro St. (also served by Route #12)  
Whittington St. at Goodwill Industries  
Whittington St. at Bellevue St.  
Whittington St. at MLK Jr. Drive

##### ***Inbound:***

Whittington St. & Bellevue St.  
Whittington St. & Arlington St.  
Whittington St. & Eugene St.  
S. Elm-Eugene St. & Doak St.  
S. Elm-Eugene St. & South St.  
S. Elm-Eugene St. & Sussmans St.  
Sussmans St. & Flag St.  
Sussmans St. & Ashe St.  
Ashe St. & Lama St. (also served by Route #12)  
Ashe St. & South St. (also served by Route #12)  
Ashe St. & Doak St. (also served by Route #12)  
Ashe St. & Whittington St. (also served by Route #12)  
Eugene St. at Goodwill Industries (also served by Route #12)  
Eugene St. & Bragg St. (also served by Route #12)  
McGee St. & Federal Place (also served by Route #12)

#### **Route #13 MLK will no longer serve the following bus stops:**

##### ***Outbound:***

MLK Jr. Drive & Murray St.  
MLK Jr. Drive & Brooks Court  
MLK Jr. Drive & Douglas St.

##### ***Inbound:***

MLK Jr. Drive & Julian St.  
MLK Jr. Drive & Douglas St.  
MLK Jr. Drive & Bragg St.  
MLK Jr. Drive & Murray St.

#### **Route #4 Benbow/Willow Road will serve the following bus stops not served by Route #13:**

##### ***Outbound:***

MLK Jr. Drive & Murray St.  
MLK Jr. Drive & Brooks Court  
MLK Jr. Drive & Douglas St.

##### ***Inbound:***

MLK Jr. Drive & Julian St.  
MLK Jr. Drive & Douglas St.  
MLK Jr. Drive & Bragg St.  
MLK Jr. Drive & Murray St.

#### **Note:**

**There are no changes to Route #12 S. Elm-Eugene St.**





# SUMMERTIME!



## PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

### *Sedans join SCAT service fleet*

Greensboro Transit Authority's Specialized Community Area Transportation (SCAT) service, in an effort to provide more efficient paratransit services, has acquired four automobiles to transport riders with disabilities.

The four-door sedans were phased into regular service this past April to allow SCAT to provide transportation services with a minimum number of clients on a trip. The sedans will be used during all normal SCAT operating hours for ambulatory clients who are able to fasten their seatbelts. Each sedan is driven by a fully trained GTA operator and is able to transport up to four clients, eliminating the required use of the SCAT vans with a maximum capacity of 18 people.

The scheduling and dispatching of the sedans mirrors the larger SCAT van, providing door-to-door service to persons with disabilities who are not able to access the GTA fixed route transportation service. Using a lighter, more gas-efficient vehicle, however, allows SCAT to save money on fuel and maintenance, lowering the cost of transport.

"Our SCAT van fleet meets our needs for carrying multiple clients to destinations around the city" says Libby James, Public Transportation Manager. "However, due to the unique scheduling needs of paratransit clients, there have been periods of only one or two people in a vehicle. Instead of dispatching virtually empty vans during those times, the sedans will allow us to transport smaller client groups while minimizing the cost associated with the larger van use."

The sedans are being provided at no cost by Veolia Transportation, GTA's contractor for transit operations and maintenance. Through the partnership, GTA is responsible solely for the fuel and maintenance costs. If the service is successful, GTA plans to use grant funds to purchase permanently-owned vehicles.



### *SCAT's new scheduling software to provide more efficient trip planning*

GTA's Specialized Community Area Transportation (SCAT) service is presented weekly with a persistent challenge: To schedule door-to-door transportation service for paratransit passengers in the most efficient way possible. A new software program acquired by GTA is expected to do just that. Trapeze is a paratransit scheduling package that offers to manage the important balance between cost control and providing effective service. Among the offerings of the new software are client registration, trip booking and scheduling applications that will meet the needs of SCAT clients who travel sporadically or daily.

SCAT is implementing Trapeze as a shared system with Winston-Salem Transit Authority and Hi-Tran. All three organizations have been meeting for extensive training, and since implementing on April 3, have begun tweaking the system for their respective uses. As SCAT works to get the system working at optimal efficiency, we thank the riders for their patience as we make the important transition that will pay large dividends in the future.



# SUMMERTIME!



SNAPSHOTS, *ontinued from page 1*



*GDOT Director Jim Westmoreland and Planning's Peggy Holland speak with guests at the kickoff for the Triad Commute Challenge, held at the J. Douglas Galyon Depot.*

*Two HEAT buses pass on a wintry day at UNCG. Over 260,000 passenger trips were taken on HEAT in the first year of service.*



*Sherria Allen of Public Transportation distributes Rosa Parks commemorative buttons at the Depot in celebration of Rosa Parks Day.*



*Stretching over Highway 29 is the new East Market Street bridge, part of phase 3 of the East Market Street Streetscape project between Church Street and English Street.*



*Students at Bluford Elementary with plenty of questions prepare for an exciting ride on GTA. Bus Orientations are available from GTA for all ages.*

*Administration's Margie Chrismon shares her class project from a cake designing course. It looked and tasted like an A-plus!*



*Virginia Tech Tribute – HEAT's ten transit buses all displayed memorial ribbons in support of Virginia Tech following the campus tragedy in April. The ribbons remained on the bus for the remainder of the semester.*

